

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the Summary)
)
Suspension of the Educator Certificate)
)
of William Samuel Warden,)
)
Certificate 278237)
_____)

**ORDER OF
SUMMARY SUSPENSION**

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The Chair of the South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on August 9, 2016. In accordance with S.C. Code Ann. § 1-23-370(c) (2004), § 59-5-10 (2004), and State Board Rule of Governance BBABA, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) requested that the Chair of the State Board summarily suspend the educator certificate of William Samuel Warden, certificate 278237 as a result of an investigation by the City of Aiken Department of Public Safety involving an inappropriate relationship between Mr. Warden and a female sixteen year old high school student that resulted in his arrest for Sexual Exploitation of a Minor, 1st degree (1 count) , Solicitation of a Minor (2 counts), and Contributing to the Delinquency of a Minor (3 counts). The SCDE has reason to believe that, due to the serious nature of these allegations of misconduct and corroborating evidence that such a relationship existed and that Mr. Warden may pose a threat to the health, safety and welfare of students that may be under his instruction, emergency action is required. After considering the evidence presented by the SCDE, the Chair of the State Board finds that Mr. Warden's educator certificate shall be summarily suspended until a due process hearing is held and/or this matter is otherwise resolved. The SCDE is directed to serve notice on Mr. Warden of the summary suspension, as well as the possible suspension or revocation of his educator certificate.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Mr. Warden holds a professional South Carolina educator certificate and has one year of teaching experience. Mr. Warden has been employed as a mathematics teacher at Aiken County High School (School) with the Aiken County School District (District). Mr. Warden was placed on administrative leave on August 1, 2016 following allegations that he had been arrested for an inappropriate relationship with a sixteen year old female who was being tutored by Mr. Warden

during the summer and charged with Sexual Exploitation of a Minor, 1st degree (1 count), Solicitation of a Minor (2 counts), and Contributing to the Delinquency of a Minor (3 counts). The charges are both felonies and misdemeanors.

It is alleged that beginning in May 2016, Mr. Warden began having an inappropriate relationship with the student. According to the arrest warrants, Mr. Warden requested the student send him sexually suggestive photos via social media. He referred to alcohol as “study aids” and requested he use it while performing sexual acts on her. The SCDE has reason to believe that, due to the serious nature of this allegation of misconduct, Mr. Warden may pose a threat to the health, safety and welfare of students that may be under his instruction and that emergency action is required. After considering the evidence presented by the SCDE, the Chair of the State Board finds that Mr. Warden’s educator certificate shall be summarily suspended until a due process hearing is held and/or this matter is otherwise resolved. The SCDE is directed to serve notice on Mr. Warden of the summary suspension, as well as the possible suspension or revocation of his educator certificate.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

“The South Carolina Board of Education may, for just cause, either revoke or suspend the certificate of any person.” S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-150 (2004). Just cause includes unprofessional conduct, immorality, and evident unfitness for position for which employed. S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2004); 24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-58 (2011). In accordance with S.C. Code Ann. § 1-23-370(c) (2004), “If the agency finds that the public health, safety or welfare imperatively requires emergency action, and incorporates a finding to that effect in its order, summary suspension of a license may be ordered pending proceedings for revocation or other action.” Pursuant to S.C. Code Ann § 59-5-10 (2004) and State Board Rule of Governance BBABA, the Chair of the State Board finds that as a result of the allegations of Mr. Warden’s unprofessional conduct, immorality, and evident unfitness for the position for which employed, there is reason to believe that Mr. Warden may pose a threat to the health, safety and welfare of students and that emergency action is required. Accordingly, the educator certificate of William Samuel Warden, certificate 278237, is summarily suspended until a due process hearing is held and/or this matter is otherwise resolved. The SCDE is directed to serve notice on Mr. Warden of

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the summary suspension, as well as the possible suspension or revocation of his educator certificate.

AND IT IS SO ORDERED.

South Carolina State Board of Education

By: _____

Michael R. Brennan, Chair

Columbia, South Carolina

August 9, 2016